

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 /086 W
-----141806Z 026549 /43

R 141745Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6474
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 04539

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, US, GE, GW
SUBJECT: GDR BLOCKS ENTRY OF VISITORS TO THE LEIPZIG
FAIR

1. THE WEST GERMAN PRESS OVER THE WEEKEND, AND PARTICULARLY TODAY, HAS HEADLINED THE FACT THAT EAST GERMAN BORDER PERSONNEL REFUSED ENTRY TO ABOUT 170 FRG AND WEST BERLIN RESIDENTS WHO WISHED TO ENTER THE GDR TO ATTEND THE LEIPZIG FAIR. THE CATEGORIES OF RESIDENTS DENIED ENTRY WERE (1) PERSONS WHO HAD RECENTLY EMIGRATED FROM THE GDR AND (2) PERSONS WHO HAD RELATIVES IN EAST GERMANY APPLYING FOR EMIGRATION.

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2. THESE MEASURES CONTINUE THE RECENT TREND OF EAST GERMAN ACTIONS AGAINST CERTAIN WESTERNERS WISHING TO VISIT THE GDR AND EAST BERLIN, SUCH ACTIONS INCLUDING NOT ONLY DENIALS OF ENTRY BUT, AS REPORTED SEPARATELY, FEES FOR "THE USAGE OF ROADS."

3. DURING RECENT DISCUSSIONS, FRG OFFICIALS IN THE INNER-GERMAN MINISTRY (WEICHERT) AND IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE (MEYER-LANDRUT) HAVE TOLD US THAT THE FRG REMAINS UNCERTAIN HOW TO COUNTER THESE EAST GERMAN ACTIONS. THERE WAS A SENIOR LEVEL FRG POLICY REVIEW (BONN'S 04456), BUT NO DECISIONS HAVE YET BEEN TAKEN.

4. WEICHERT BELIEVES THAT THE FRG PROBABLY CANNOT DO ANYTHING THAT WILL PERSUADE OR COMPEL THE GDR TO REVERSE SUCH MEASURES AS THE ROAD USAGE FEE. HE SAID THAT CONTINGENCY PLANNING DOES NOT APPEAR USEFUL FOR DEALING WITH GDR ACTIONS THAT ARISE OUT OF THE REGIME'S BASIC CONCERN ABOUT ITS OWN STABILITY. MEYER-LANDRUT ALSO SHOWED HIMSELF SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES FOR REVERSING SUCH GDR ACTIONS, BUT HE SAID IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE SURE THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, IN FUTURE LEIPZIG FAIRS THERE ARE NO SUCH LARGE NUMBERS OF ENTRY REFUSALS.

5. ACCORDING TO WEICHERT, THE GDR WILL ACTUALLY LOSE MONEY BY INTRODUCING THE NEW ROAD USAGE FEE. ALTHOUGH THE FEE MIGHT BRING IN SOME CASH, IT WILL CUT TRAVEL ENOUGH TO MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL DENT IN VISA REVENUES AND IN THE TOTALS OF THE COMPULSORY MINIMUM AMOUNTS EXCHANGED BY TRAVELERS. MOST IMPORTANT, HE SAID, EAST GERMANY WOULD LOSE REVENUES FROM THE LARGE SALES OF GASOLINE THAT IT MAKES TO WEST GERMAN DRIVERS.

6. AS FOR FUTURE SUBJECTS OF NEGOTIATION WITH THE GDR, CONFIDENTIAL

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WEICHERT AND MEYER-LANDRUT GENERALLY CONFIRMED INFORMATION EARLIER REPORTED BY OUR BERLIN MISSION AND OUR-

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 /086 W

-----141806Z 026576 /42

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 04539

SELVES. ONE IMPORTANT EXCEPTION WAS WEICHERT'S OBSERVATION THAT NO PROGRESS CAN NOW BE MADE ON THE HAMBURG AUTOBAHN BECAUSE EAST GERMAN ROAD BUILDING CAPACITY IS ALREADY OVERSTRAINED (WHICH ACCOUNTS IN PART FOR THE DELAYS AND THE INADEQUATE LEVEL OF WORK DONE ON THE BERLIN-HELMSTEDT AUTOBAHN).

7. BOTH WEICHERT AND MEYER-LANDRUT MUSED PHILOSOPHICALLY ABOUT THE DILEMMA FACING THE FRG IN DEALING WITH GDR PINPRICKS: THE FRG CAN RETALIATE, BUT RETALIATION ONLY DEEPENS THE DIVISION BETWEEN THE TWO
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GERMANY'S AND PLAYS INTO THE HANDS OF THE "HAWKS" IN THE SED. MOREOVER, BOTH OBSERVED THAT THE EAST GERMANS ARE BY NO MEANS STOPPING ALL PERSONS IN THE TWO CATEGORIES OF GDR EMIGRANTS OR RELATIVES OF WOULD-BE GDR EMIGRANTS.

8. IT APPEARED QUITE CLEAR TO BOTH THAT THE GDR IS STOPPING JUST ENOUGH PEOPLE TO MAKE ITS POINT AND, INCIDENTALLY, TO COMPLICATE THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS OF THE FRG IN JUSTIFYING ITS INNER-GERMAN POLICY. THE GDR IS NOT, HOWEVER, STOPPING SO MANY THAT IT JEOPARDIZES SUCH INTERESTS OF ITS OWN AS LARGE ATTENDANCE AT THE LEIPZIG FAIR.

9. WEICHERT ALSO OBSERVED THAT THE IMPOSITION OF FEES

ON EAST GERMAN TRUCKS USING WEST GERMAN ROADS SEEMED
LIKE A TEMPTING BUT QUESTIONABLE COUNTERMEASURE. HE
OBSERVED THAT, BECAUSE OF THE SAD STATE OF EAST GERMAN
RAILWAYS, A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF EAST GERMAN LAND TRADE
WITH THE FRG TRAVELED BY ROAD AND IN EAST GERMAN
CARRIERS. HOWEVER, IMPOSITION OF A FEE ON SUCH CARRIERS
WOULD MERELY HARDEN GDR FINANCIAL DEMANDS IN OTHER AREAS.
THEREFORE, IT DID NOT SEEM A SENSIBLE OPTION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, VISITS, TRADE FAIRS, NATIONALITY, ENTRY VISAS, BERLIN HIGHWAY ACCESS, FEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BONN04539
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770087-0326
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770364/aaaaceda.tel
Line Count: 179
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a68424b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3122412
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GDR BLOCKS ENTRY OF VISITORS TO THE LEIPZIG FAIR
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, US, GC, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a68424b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009